



GEORGETOWN CITIZENS SHOW THE WAY TO SUCCESS—In meetings such as this the Georgetown Citizens' Association has developed and worked for the achievement of group objectives. Discussing a controversial motion are (left to right) Admiral Neill Phillips, chairman of the Conservation Committee; Mrs. Harold B. Hinton, vice president, and Raymond M. Wilmotte, president.—Star Staff Photo.

Old Georgetown Thrives Under Able Defenders

By CHRISTIE RINEHART

Old Georgetown has found itself an able defender in one of the city's most vigorous and successful citizens' groups.

In its incessant fight to preserve the historic charm and residential character of the area, the Progressive Citizens' Association of Georgetown has used a three-fold attack: Know what you want, find out how to get it and work hard for it.

Always outspoken and persistent in its aims, the association last night went after one of its newest members, Allen Dulles, director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Mr. Dulles had been named as the site of a new building for the agency when the citizens adopted a motion opposing the location of the new building on the site of the old Stone House.

The group said it would write a letter to the intelligence chief, who was not at the meeting, listing its objections to the Langley location and asking him to reconsider the proposal.

The steady battle to create and keep the kind of area they want has paid off enormous dividends to the neighborhood.

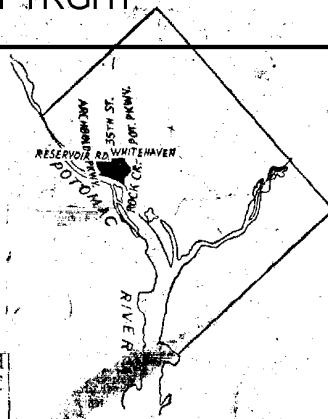
have planned carefully and fought hard for the kind of neighborhood they have today.

Got Law Passed

The 29-year-old organization has a remarkable list of achievements to show for its work. Probably the biggest victory was the passage of the old Georgetown Act in September, 1950, which laid out the boundaries of the area and set up requirements to preserve its architectural character.

The Old Georgetown Act was conceived at a meeting of one of the group's committees in 1949, which met to consider what could be done to stop the razing of three historic buildings at Thirty-first and M streets N.W. Examination of ordinances in effect in Alexandria and Charleston, S.C., led the group to the idea that a law to protect the character of Georgetown could be obtained.

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The effort was culminated in the passage of the bill on September 13, 1950, the same day another of the group's pet projects received a favorable nod from Congress. This was the fight to save Old Stone House, the last pre-Revolutionary War structure in the District. Congress acquired the house as a museum to be part of the National Park System.

Pressed for Restoration

This fall, with the association still pressing its suit, restoration of the structure was begun by the National Park Service.

Mrs. Harold B. Hinton, vice president and chairman of the association's zoning committee, led the fight for the Old Stone House restoration.

Another major part of the group's program has been to seek improved zoning regulations for

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Georgetown. After the "discovery" of Georgetown in the 1920s, when real estate values soared, the newly formed association began its fight against commercial intrusion and apartment house construction.

It succeeded in having a 40-foot height limit placed on Georgetown buildings and in setting large portions of the area zoned from commercial to residential use. The group also successfully fought the rezoning of the Friendship estate to permit apartment houses in 1948.

Retain Paving Blocks

Other campaigns through the years have included cleanup drives, which have featured annual parties for Georgetown's street cleaners for the last 10 years; tree-saving moves and insistence on paving blocks and brick sidewalks.

Among the most active members of the association have been Rear Admiral Neill Phillips, Mrs. Frank A. West, architect Grosvenor Chapman, John Ihlder, former executive director of the National Capital Housing Authority, Stephen P. Dorsey and Miss Dorothea de Schweinitz.

To encourage building and remodeling in the spirit of George-

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town architecture, the group has given awards for several years to the commercial establishments best conforming to the standards.

The Progressive Citizens' Association was formed in 1926 by a group of Georgetown women under the leadership of Miss Etta L. Taggart. When they could not gain admission to Georgetown's older citizens' group, the women organized their own group with the idea that the men who barred them were merely "old-fashioned" and needed an object lesson in the value of the feminine touch in civic work.

Miss Taggart was the first president of the group, which emphasized it bore no malice to

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the older group but thought women should not be deprived of their right to roles in civic work. Men were admitted to the new association from the beginning.

Always historical-minded, one of the group's first actions was sponsorship of a National Historical Pageant to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. The affair, held on the banks of the Potomac, drew local and national dignitaries, and, Miss Taggart recalls, a fine time was had by all.

At its meeting last night, the citizens advocated a four-point program to help combat pollution of the Potomac River. They said they will press to speed up the District Public Works program, support development of a master plan for sewage treatment for the area, oppose construction of the proposed Potomac Electric Power Co. plant below Great Falls, and support a bill to give Federal aid to the pollution problem which will be introduced in Congress by Representative Broyhill of Virginia and Senator Morse of Oregon.

Other Actions Taken

In other action, the group:

Sent a letter to the National Park Service commending its decision to reconsider building a highway along the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal.

Supported, "in general," the Zoning Commission's proposed interim amendment that would set minimum lot areas and minimum lot widths pending passage of the new zoning code.

Opposed a variance of zoning yard requirements at 1236 Potomac street N.W. where Walter Bramhall, a former association president, is seeking permission to remodel a stable into apartments.

Said it would ask Brig. Gen. Thomas A. Lane, District Engineer Commissioner, to instruct the Corporation Counsel to examine the legality of a scheme to permit Georgetown residents to receive parking preference in the area over other cars, by use of parking stickers.

Raymond M. Willmott, president, conducted the meeting in Christ Episcopal Church, Thirty-first and O streets N.W.